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ABSTRACT

The identification of strategies for the improvement of individual and organizational effectiveness is the purpose of this task force summary report. Methodology involved passive and active needs assessment techniques. Over 200 New York State Education Department employees voluntarily participated in quality circles, the active component, and a written questionnaire, the passive component. The task force proposes five interrelated human resource strategies for organizational, management, career, and employee development; and cultural diversity. A section on each strategy includes a discussion and an outline of proposed long-range action plans. Recommendations include the establishment of an Office of Human Resource Planning and Development and a Media and Materials Development Center, recruitment of staff volunteers, and realistic financial resource allocation. (LMI)

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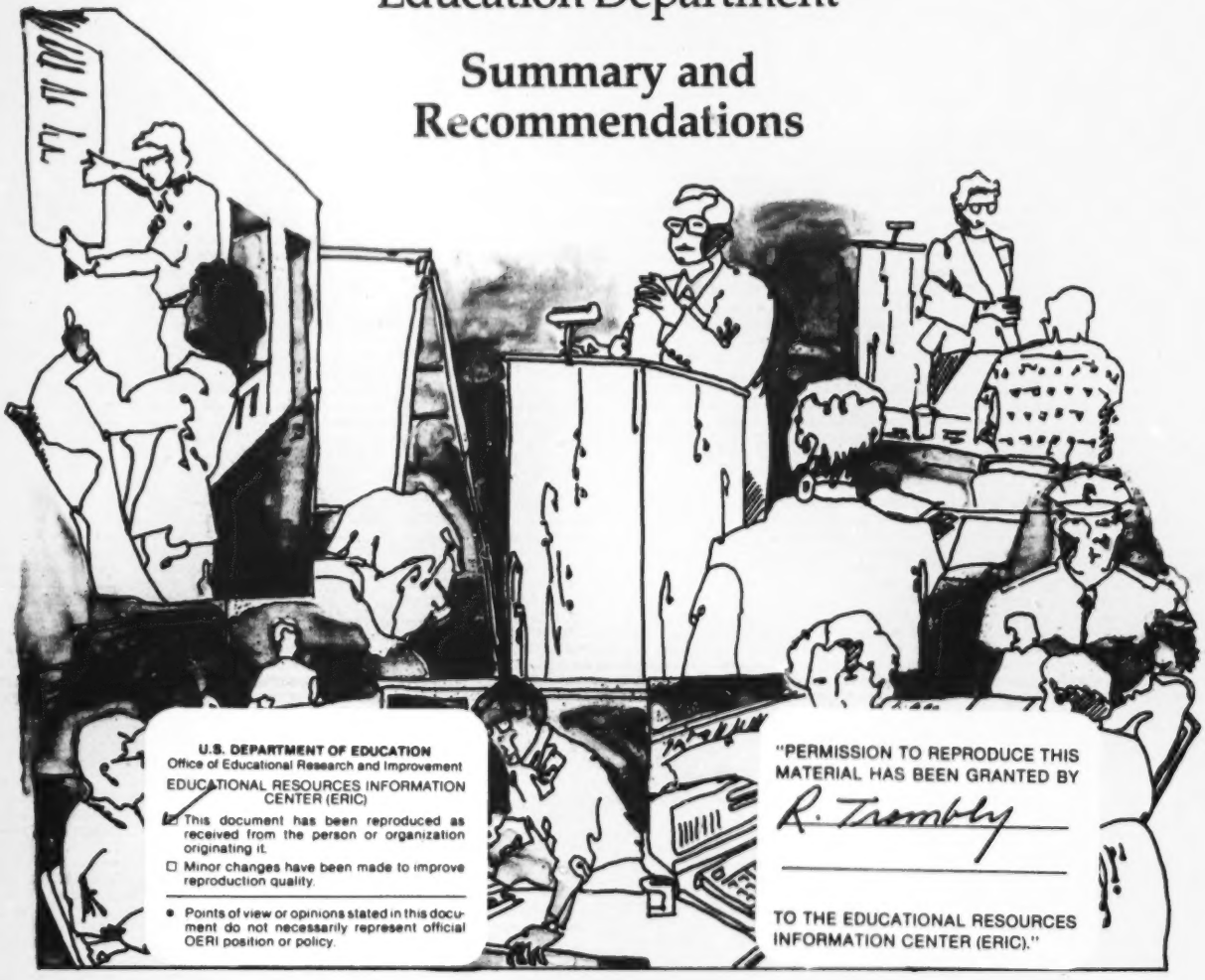
EMPOWERING
STAFF IN AN ORGANIZATION

Making the Most of Human Resources in the New York State Education Department

Summary and Recommendations



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THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT TASK FORCE
Albany, New York 12234

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Making the Most of Human Resources
in the New York State
Education Department

Summary and
Recommendations

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT TASK FORCE
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Note

The purpose of this text is to provide interested individuals and organizations a summary of a report to the Commissioner of Education, Thomas Sobol, on staff development and training needs in the New York State Education Department (SED). The report was presented to the Commissioner by the Training and Development Project Task Force on behalf of all SED employees in January 1990.

This text provides summaries of each of the chapters of the full report. The section entitled "Discussion of the Recommendations for Human Resource Planning and Development" presents the recommended strategies, as well as the discussion of issues affecting strategy implementation, in their entirety. Unlike the full report, this text does not contain the analysis of the process and methods used; the summary of data collected by quality circles; or the three appendices, showing raw data from quality circle interaction and statistical findings of a staff perceptions survey.

The full report is available, on a limited basis, by contacting:

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Funding for this publication, the full report and the project consultant was provided through a grant from the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations.

Empowering Staff in an Organization:

Making the Most of Human Resources in the New York State Education Department

Summary and Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

For the past 20 years, trying to mount an effective staff development program in the State Education Department (SED) has been a frustrating and largely unsuccessful effort. While other agencies have established and maintained comprehensive development and training programs, SED has trudged along with an understaffed and poorly funded Staff Development Unit. One senses SED's management had not seen staff development as a major concern.

This attitude is changing. Top management has come to realize the need for staff development and training and its close connection to improving morale and productivity. Changing demographics of the workforce, as well, demand that we pay more attention to staff development and training.

Empowering Staff in an Organization: Making the Most of Human Resources in the New York State Education Department, besides offering recommendations for comprehensive human resource planning and development strategies in SED, reveals how the recommendations evolved through the involvement of SED employees and external consultants.

The process was an organization development effort. The major concern was: what do we need to do to make both the individual employee and the organization more effective?

CURRENT STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development in SED can best be described as eclectic and uncoordinated. Union-negotiated training programs were meant to supplement, not supplant, agency-sponsored/developed programs. However, union-negotiated programs have become the bulk of SED's staff development programs, while traditionally SED-sponsored programs have fallen into disuse. Despite many efforts, lack of strong organizational commitment to providing funds and staff to deliver programs has caused important needs to go unmet.

THE COMMUNITY PROCESS

Under the leadership of the Training and Development Project Task Force, appointed by Commissioner Sobol in October 1988, over 200 employees (members of the organizational community) volunteered to advise on proposed activities and collect data through quality circle interaction. Many others offered additional help to promote the process.

Quality circle interaction (from June to July 1989) was used as an "active" method of determining needs. A paper and pencil survey (the "Current Employees Questionnaire," distributed to all employees in July 1989) was used as a "passive" method.

These methods are discussed in the full report. The findings of both methods are congruent with each other. The Task Force used these findings to make their final recommendations.

DATA COLLECTED BY QUALITY CIRCLES

The data collected by 24 quality circles is summarized in the full report in the form of suggested solutions for a more effective organization. The suggestions are outlined within these topics:

- Department Mission;
- SED's Image, Staff Talents and Abilities;
- The Role Managers Play;
- Participation and Empowerment;
- Team-Building;
- Workforce Innovations;
- Rules, Regulations and Employees;
- Performance Appraisals;
- Quality of Work Life;
- Incentives and Motivations;
- Career Development;
- Growth Opportunities;
- Financial Support; and
- Centralized Human Resource Planning and Development.

DISCUSSION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Under the umbrella title of human resource planning and development, the Task Force proposes five strategies, as part of the entire set of recommendations. The strategies cover the concepts, approaches, philosophies, rationale and action steps resulting from the community process. Human resource planning refers to how employees are deployed to conduct activities in SED; human resource development to how employees are assisted and guided by SED to perform their jobs as competently as possible.

Both the "active" and the "passive" methods of data gathering indicate a number of issues affecting the work environment in SED:

- Parochial views of unit missions;
- Limited staff recognition and rewards;
- Predominance of a traditional, top-down administrative approach and limited participatory involvement in decision-making;
- Lack of formal management training;
- Ambivalence on the part of staff and managers toward the role of training;
- Limited resources to deliver necessary courses and programs to meet identified staff needs;
- Perceived unfairness in practices related to selection, promotion and job mobility;

- Ineffective and uneven flow of communication to staff; and
- Limited awareness and/or ambivalence toward managing and working within an effective, diverse workforce.

Limiting recommendations solely to staff development and specific training goals would do little to create changes which improve the environment in SED. The strategies proposed aim to create change over the long haul. They will involve many individuals at all levels of the organization, significant units of SED with direct or indirect responsibility for matters related to human resources, and public and private organizations.

The **human resource planning and development strategies** are:

- **Organization development**—SED needs a top-management–supported, long-range effort to improve the organization's problem-solving and renewal process.
- **Management development**—SED needs to set up formal development activities especially designed for managers, including activities to support the recommendations of the Task Force's report.
- **Career development**—SED needs a strategy that identifies career ladders, provides for mentoring, creates a career development center, provides related training, and relates careers to participatory involvement and workforce mobility projects.
- **Employee development**—SED employees have individual development needs related to their jobs and/or personal growth that should be met.
- **Cultural diversity**—SED's human resource strategies must be designed to foster productivity in a diverse workforce and to improve the skills of employees serving a diverse citizenry.

These strategies overlap and intertwine. Organization development and cultural diversity are threads that run throughout the other three strategies. Management development, career development and employee development are strategies which are usually associated with staff development and training.

The following is the complete set of strategies. Each is presented in the following format: 1) a discussion of the strategy, and 2) an outline of recommended action steps to be conducted over the long haul.

After the presentation of the strategies, four issues affecting strategy implementation are discussed: establishment of an Office of Human Resource Planning and Development, approval of a Media and Materials Development Center, recruitment of staff as volunteer trainers and allocation of financial resources.

STRATEGIES

I. ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this strategy is to provide an atmosphere of safety, leadership and trust, as the other strategies discussed in this chapter (i.e., management, career and employee development, and cultural diversity) are implemented. Organization development, as an overall and far-reaching strategy for human resource planning and development, will focus on interventions and approaches, within SED and with other agencies and organizations, to bring about the formulation of new directions for using the talents, skills and abilities of staff.

A strategic use of organization development interventions and approaches, directly focused on human resource planning and development, would include staff at all levels in such roles as the following:

- priority setting
- diagnosis
- intergroup activities
- process consultation
- improvement of systems in SED (structural and technological)
- team-building
- feedback
- education and training
- conflict management

These organization development approaches are necessary if a comprehensive human resource planning and development effort is to evolve and take shape. The approaches can simultaneously lay the groundwork for the acceptance and understanding of changes that are needed.

Organization development strategies must begin with support from SED management, if efforts are to be credible. Management, in turn, should seek ways to involve staff in human resource planning and development through a participatory mode. Such participation has been allowed to happen through the volunteer efforts of more than 200 individuals, as evidenced by this report. It is the responsibility of management to nurture the progress of the recommendations.

Organization development will also require the invaluable assistance and leadership of key SED units with responsibilities related to the action steps of the recommended strategies.

Finally, quality circle input has made a clear recommendation that a centralized SED unit be charged with the responsibility of consultancy to aid in the establishment of needed organizational linkages in SED, which are directly related to human resource planning and development, and to expand the vision of such planning and development.

Action Steps

A. Establish a mission statement for SED, through team effort, which reflects the complex nature of SED.

1. Involve all levels in a "community process" to:
   a. construct the mission statement itself;
   b. develop associated principles; and
   c. articulate related values.
2. Promote (market) the effort to develop the mission statement.
3. Provide constant feedback on effort until it is completed.
4. Use the mission statement to drive SED policy.

B. Establish effective working relationships (linkages) which make changes in human resource development possible. Include —

1. Department of Civil Service;
2. Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER);
3. representative unions; and
4. other appropriate public and private sector agencies.

C. Establish a culture in SED that is "tenacious and bullish" on human resource planning and development, but first—

1. Engage the support of top and middle management to inspire and motivate staff about:
   a. their own development;
   b. their unit's development; and
   c. the organization as a whole.
2. Provide ongoing tangible rewards to managers who promote human resource planning and development.

D. Establish mechanisms for effective organizational communication affecting employees, especially in the following areas—

1. Human resource planning and development:
   a. Create and design team approaches to problem-solving regarding management, career and employee development, as well as cultural diversity among:
      1) Deputy Commissioner offices;
      2) Divisions and Bureaus; and
      3) managers and employees.

b. Employ a variety of interactive techniques for communication and decision-making, such as:

1) organization development consultancy on a centralized SED level;
2) quality circles;
3) open feedback forums; and
4) other approaches, including state-of-the-art methods of communicating and teleconferencing with regional staff.

2. Information on job opportunities and promotions:

a. Create linkages within SED that provide an efficient and more even flow of information:

1) Division of Personnel;
2) Human Resources Planning and Development;
3) Deputy Commissioner offices;
4) Affirmative Action Office; and
5) representative unions.

b. Create equally important linkages with

1) GOER;
2) Department of Civil Service; and
3) other agencies.

E. Establish systems of reward and recognition for excellence, productivity, cooperation and achievement.

1. Develop systems that publicize employee efforts at all levels:

a. Departmentwide;
b. officewide;
c. unitwide;
d. interoffice;
e. interagency;
f. team work; and
g. individual efforts.

II. MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

The proposed management development strategy seeks to gain the effective and proactive support of approximately 300 managers or supervisors, who oversee the activities of the 3600 employees reporting to them.

There are two major components under this strategy:

- To obtain managers' involvement in the overall effort to initi ate human resource planning and development.
- To establish specific formats and approaches related to the formal development of managers.

Rationale for the first focus overlaps with the previous discussion of the proposed organization development strategy—managers' input is essential to all human resource planning and development efforts. The human resource planning and development strategies recommended by quality circles aim to empower both individuals (not just managers, but all employees) and the organization. Because of this, priority setting, goal setting, and organizational linkages must be established by management for any of these strategies to succeed.

- The rationale for the second focus is indicated in the discussion of issues affecting the work environment in SED and also by the numerous suggestions on perceived needs of managers, as discussed in the summary of quality circle data. A formal management development effort cannot be imposed. Managers must recognize the need, welcome change, set goals for the effort and plan for it.

External consultants have expressed interest in helping with a centralized SED effort in management development, as well as in helping with the goals and establishment of the other strategies proposed in this report.

Action steps, described below, point to the need for managers to unite to produce efforts which provide meaningful exchange of ideas, experiences and the creation, operation and evaluation of a variety or combination of activities and processes to meet both components of the management development strategy.

In terms of specific formatting of the formalized development of managers, there are many possibilities to be explored, for example: core programs, forums, institutes, conferences, courses, seminars, innovative pilot models, independent study, on-the-job applications, independent readings, process consultation, etc.

These formats should be complemented, as appropriate, with union-negotiated and GOER-sponsored programs such as "Careers in Management" and "Managing for Effectiveness." These courses are based on the premise that management development is largely self-development and that managers play a crucial role in the productivity and career progress of those who report to them.

The use of staff members, other than those in managerial positions, is also proposed, including the establishment of a cadre of SED staff as trainers and facilitators within the various management development efforts and activities. Mentoring is suggested as an important part of management development to serve as a means of providing fellowship and support for new managers.

The management development efforts will serve as a backdrop for the formulation and implementation of innovative policies and pilot programs, especially in the areas of participatory decision-

making and team-building. These efforts are essential to realizing SED's potential to change management style from a traditional, hierarchical bureaucracy to one of participatory management and decision-making.

By its nature, a participatory pilot should have elements which direct staff of a unit (the manager and his or her employees) in learning how to reach their fullest potential and to be actively engaged in the collective management of the unit and in maintaining the unit's productivity in relation to the goals of SED. In order to demonstrate how managers are enablers, protected environments for the exploration and development of this mode of management are needed.

Action Steps:

A. Obtain managers' involvement in the overall effort to initiate human resource planning and development.

1. Establish forums for consensus on human resource planning and human resource management policies which improve morale and make effective use of employee skills through—
   a. strategic planning;
   b. participatory involvement; and
   c. team activities.
2. Establish policies to maximize use of the performance appraisal system as a method of accountability for the evaluation of human resource planning and development.
3. Develop strategies and set priorities regarding the human resource development suggested by quality circles in this report —
   a. management development;
   b. career development;
   c. employee development; and
   d. cultural diversity.
4. Develop work force innovations that increase employees' potential for mobility and growth through—
   a. voluntary temporary job assignments;
   b. job-rotation;
   c. cross-training;
   d. interagency job exchanges; and
   e. private sector job exchanges.

B. Establish formats for the formal development of managers.

1. Include managers in the establishment of their collective strategies for management development.
2. Include nonmanagerial staff in participatory decision-making activities related to management development.
3. Develop a framework for areas of need.
4. Establish a core curriculum for management development.
5. Establish a program of succession planning (assessment of future management needs and talent among incumbent staff for possible succession).
6. Establish a cadre of SED staff as trainers, facilitators and mentors within the management development efforts.
7. Use union-negotiated and GOER-sponsored programs as part of management development.

C. Establish procedures for participatory pilot/research models. For example—

1. Select two SED units to pilot participatory management skills and theory, within the framework of these units' goals, objectives and activities.
2. Secure respective and appropriate involvement of all staff within the span of control of the managers participating in this pilot/research model.
3. Provide training to all employees of the selected units which is complementary to the training being received by the unit managers.

III. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career development is the centerpiece of all the strategies proposed. It is fair to state that there are no formal strategies for developing one's career in SED. Both the passive needs assessment (the Current Employees Questionnaire) and the active needs assessment (the quality circle focus interviews) reveal the frustration of staff in terms of perceiving SED as a workplace where one can achieve his or her career goals. This perception is similar for staff at all levels of responsibility.

The career development strategy consists of six major components:

- Identification of career ladders and crosswalks[1];
- Establishment of mentoring as part of career development;

[1]Crosswalks refer to plateau levels between two compatible career ladders which allow transfer from one career option to another.

- Creation of a career development resource center;
- Development of career-related training;
- Correlation of career development with participatory involvement efforts; and
- Correlation of career development with workforce innovations for career mobility.

These components were suggested by SED staff as very broad and overreaching steps in the creation of the career development strategy. The initial stages for the development of the strategy (beginning in 1990-91), would consist of organization development activities to establish internal (SED) and external support of the program.

A modest skeleton of the program should emerge in year three (1992-93), with some piloting of career training and mentoring, borrowed from the management development efforts. During this period, also, some of the features of the career development resource center should begin to emerge.

Career development will be correlated with the participatory pilot/research model, and the workforce innovations, which are action steps recommended for initiation under the management development strategy. The expectations are that these correlations will infuse enthusiasm and a sense of mobility among staff, and help motivate and retain a qualified workforce.

Action Steps:

A. Identify career ladders and crosswalks.

1. Use organization development techniques to review titles of employees at all levels (management, professional, technical, support and essential services) to determine steps for career ladders.
2. Develop a career development framework for career ladder and crosswalks.
3. Evaluate programs.

B. Initiate career development institutes.

1. Use organization development techniques for determining training strategies.
2. Establish a cadre of SED staff as career development trainers and facilitators.
3. Identify means to provide credits for either specific training or experience to promote career progress.
4. Use union-negotiated and GOER-sponsored training and development programs as part of career development.

C. Establish mentoring for career development.

1. Survey staff to secure volunteer mentors.
2. Screen candidates.
3. Provide training in mentoring.
4. Assist interns in career development programs with the selection of mentors.

D. Establish a career development resource center.

1. Include a variety of staff to provide the services of the center: counselors; interviewers; testing personnel; workforce planners; etc.
2. Use a variety of approaches: diagnosis/prescription; career interviews; self-analysis; self-actualization techniques; adaptive skills building; etc.
3. Use the center as a source of communication for career development, job opportunities, and the civil service system.

E. Enhance career development by correlating it with workforce innovations.

1. Use organization development techniques to begin a policy of workforce planning that focuses on future demographic predictions:
   a. Retrain incumbent staff.
   b. Recruit a qualified, diverse staff on an on-going basis.
   c. Provide job enrichment to retain qualified employees.
   d. Increase use of retired, part-time employees.
2. Establish staffing methods that create a mobile workforce:
   a. Extend opportunities for short-term assignments on task forces or team efforts.
   b. Provide for job rotations among units and employees.
   c. Exchange SED staff with employees in other agencies, school districts and cultural institutions.
   d. Exchange staff with employees in private sector businesses.
   e. Establish a system for staff to propose short-term creative work which benefits SED or enhances its image, while providing sanctuaries for such work.

IV. EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Employee development covers those areas which relate to the individual training and development needs of the worker (whether

it be a manager or an employee who reports to a manager). It includes training (e.g., training in presentation/public speaking skills, writing skills, computer skills, etc.) needed for on-the-job skills. In our use of the term, employee development is also related to personal growth skills (e.g., stress management, time management, tuition reimbursement for off-the-job education, etc.).

Many recommendations were made for these types of strategies by the quality circles. While there is talent among staff to begin some of these programs, certain important elements leading to their delivery are needed—release of staff to conduct training, release of staff to attend sessions, funding, scheduling and assessment of interested staff, etc.

The issues affecting the work environment in SED point to more crucial needs within SED for organization and management development. To provide strategies that deal only with the organization and management is to negate the fact that the recommendations of this report represent strategies for employee development—*individual* needs at all levels of SED. However, the following must be emphasized:

1. Employee development is not recommended as a substitute or replacement for the recommendations on organization and management development.
2. Employee development should not replace the attempt to initiate career development strategies.

Some of the recommendations for employee development strategies represent very specific "products" which appear to be feasible and can be undertaken with the leadership of a centralized unit for human resource planning. Other recommendations point to needed linkages and "processes," which must be developed within SED if employee development is to be organizationally effective. Still others attempt to tie "product" to "process." Staff's creativity and talent is bound to provide more ideas of this sort to connect the various strategies of this report.

The recommendations are divided into strategies related to: a) job training and b) personal growth.

Action Steps:

A. Establish mechanisms for centralized SED job-related training.

   1. Establish a pilot "train the trainer" program for SED staff who can serve as—

      a. trainers of selected employee development programs and
      b. facilitators of quality circles for the implementation of

strategies in organization, management and career development, described earlier. As part of the process—

1) Establish agreements to arrange for the release of staff trainers and facilitators which is tied to their performance appraisal.
2) Survey staff to determine interest in serving as trainers and in training trainers and facilitators.
3) Screen volunteers for expertise.
4) Train the trainers and facilitators in:
   a) andragogical approaches (adult-centered learning);
   b) presentation skills;
   c) media and materials development; and
   d) facilitation, brain-storming and consensus-attainment skills.
5) Develop an automated system of keeping information on skills of volunteers.

2. Establish training delivery in specific employee development training programs:
   a. AIDS awareness
   b. Ergonomics/VDT safety
   c. Writing skills
   d. Presentation skills
3. Institutionalize the use of currently available union-negotiated and GOER-sponsored training and development programs as follows:
   a. Review their content to determine how they fit into organization, management, career and employee development.
   b. Assess related aspects such as prior attendance, population to be reached, requirements of the programs.
   c. Determine how the "train the trainer" pilot can be used for SED delivery of the programs.
   d. Explore linkages with trainers in other State agencies for the exchange of training services.
   e. Initiate the proactive use of GOER-sponsored NYS Training Resource and Counseling Network.
4. Establish linkages with units currently providing or proposing employee development efforts. For example—
   a. Collaborate with SED offices and units on their specific employee development efforts and needs.
   b. Assist in meeting the statewide needs of SED staff for electronic data processing (EDP) training.
   c. Assist in meeting the statewide needs of SED staff for training on an SED-formulated internal controls system.[2]

[2]Internal controls refers to the safeguarding of assests through policies, procedures and practices used to carry out organizational and unit functions.

5. Expand use of SED staff as trainers in employee development programs proposed in the raw data collected by quality circles, as appropriate and feasible.
6. Provide a system for the evaluation of programs.

B. Establish mechanisms for personal growth programs.

1. Provide a comprehensive orientation program for all new employees, which after several years expands to include an employee information program for incumbent staff.
2. Reactivate the education leave program available to professional-level employees and experiment with the establish ment of other special purpose leaves for professional and nonprofessional-level staff.
3. Create linkages to promote the expansion of wellness programs statewide to SED employees.
4. Assist in ensuring the availability of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to SED employees statewide.
5. Replicate the use of SED staff trainers in the delivery of personal growth programs.
6. Expand the personal growth programs to include those proposed in the raw data collected by quality circles, as appropriate and feasible.
7. Provide a system for the evaluation of programs.

V. CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Organizations will continue to experience increasing changes in racial, cultural and value differences of people in the workforce. Successful organizations are taking steps to manage their productivity not only by making employees more appreciative of cultural differences, but also by establishing specific strategies to ensure organizational effectiveness.

Cultural diversity strategies should focus on ways to achieve the effective use of the skills, knowledge and abilities of the diverse members of incumbent and newly hired employees, as well as to prepare for the effective use of the predicted future workforce.

Much has been presented in the media and discussed at the State level on the changing demographics for the decade of the 90s and the twenty-first century. These demographics involve our nation's diversity in terms of the following attributes: racial, ethnic, religious, age, national origin, geographic, gender, linguistic, educational background and disability.

Recommended objectives for cultural diversity strategies are applicable to all the other strategies of this report (organization, management, career and employee development). The objectives are:

1. Ensure that SED's culture allows people to feel good about themselves in conjunction with their work and their relationships with their co-workers.
2. Ensure that SED policies and services meet the needs of a culturally diverse citizenry.
3. Ensure that employees are valued in terms of their knowledge, skills and abilities, and that their talents are taken into account in terms of

- recruitment
- selection
- orientation
- career development
- supervision and management
- rewards and incentives
- retention
- human relationships
- training and education
- promotion

Action Steps:

A. Establish support among top and middle level management for establishment of strategies which address cultural diversity issues.

B. Establish forums for open and aboveboard discussion, leading to the creation of strategies that address issues of cultural diversity within the practice of human resource management and development.

C. Correlate and integrate the proposed cultural diversity strategies within all phases of—

1. SED's human resource planning efforts: organizational, management, career and employee development and
2. SED's human resource management procedures—
   a. recruitment;
   b. selection;
   c. promotion;
   d. retention;
   e. supervision and management; and
   f. rewards and incentives.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommendation for an Office of Human Resource Planning and Development

The present Staff Development Unit, consisting of one professional and two support persons, does not have adequate capacity to follow through on the recommendations of the quality circles. The present unit should be expanded to the level of an office and managed by an administrator of significant rank to address the concerns of top management. This office should have the appropriate number of persons (professional, technical and support) to carry out required activities.

The Office of Human Resource Planning and Development should be charged with the mission of establishing the coordination and consultancy required by the recommended strategies. This will allow for the anchoring of these overlapping strategies and the creation of linkages to carry out the vision of the quality circles. The office must serve to collaborate with major offices of SED, in accordance with their needs, as well as with key units in SED that have influence over concerns, issues and assets related to the initiation, development and operational elements of the strategies. Collaboration with other public and private organizations must also be a vital responsibility of this office.

Because the strategies and their action steps are meant for the long haul, there will be a need to make periodic increases in the overall capacity of the office. It is recommended, therefore, that staffing of the office be increased in proportion and as appropriate to the needs of SED as a whole. Increases should also be consistent with the degree of decentralized program needs of the major SED offices.

2. Media and Materials Development Center

Media and materials development are an important factor in advancing the capacity of the proposed Office of Human Resource Planning and Development. The center will serve to promote and enhance the effectiveness of many of the action steps. For example:

a. The progress of the various strategies and the services available to staff, offices, units and individuals will be more efficiently communicated, promoted and marketed.

b. The availability of state-of-the-art equipment will make it possible to conduct more efficient modes of information dissemination, communication and conferencing approaches.

c. Hard copy materials and media products can be developed which are suitable for in-house training and development use, as well as for use by staff for making job-related presentations to the field.

It is recommended that a media and materials development center operate full-time centrally and that this center also coordinate decentralized units, which operate part-time at all major SED locations.

3. Recruitment of Volunteer Staff Trainers

The employee development strategies point to a plan to begin the training of SED staff as trainers of fellow staff members. This approach will be initiated through the delivery of selected courses. Following the initial experiments, it is expected that the approach can be expanded to make available a variety of course offerings, both job-related and other-than-job-related.

The institutionalization of the use of staff as trainers, referred to in this report as "volunteer," depends on an individual's willingness to serve in such capacity. Beyond the individual's volunteerism, comes his or her supervisor's approval for the use of time in helping in the development of other staff members. This agreement should be formalized in the volunteer's performance program. The establishment of such procedures will require collaborative decision-making.

4. Financial Resources

The action steps of this report cannot be implemented without the allocation of additional financial resources. It is recommended that an initial allocation for implementation and development of activities be established through proportionate funding shares from each major SED office. The amount agreed upon should represent realistic start-up costs which permit feasible delivery of approved activities, including such costs as the establishment of a media and materials center. Funding for subsequent years should be projected during the first year and revised annually.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

People represent the most important resource in any organization. Independently, many units of SED work very well; SED as a whole is not making the most of the talents and capabilities of its personnel. Over and over, staff have expressed the view that little regard had been given to their developmental needs.

The recommendations in this report aim to support and strengthen SED, which at present is steeped in tradition, with layers and layers of centrally determined procedures. While the recommendations propose a degree of centralized responsibility, especially in terms of the implementation of the

proposed strategies for human resource planning and development, they also imply and will allow for decentralized decision-making. They include participation and involvement on the part of major offices and units, especially in terms of how the strategies relate to particular needs.

The Work in America Institute has conducted pioneering research and analysis in the effective use of human resources and has been a vocal advocate of employee involvement programs. In one of their reports, they stated:

> When an organization introduces employee involvement ... as a way of managing human resources, it has begun a long journey. Often the goal is clear, but the route is uncertain and difficult. Changing over from a traditional top-down management structure, with layers of authority, to a participative system with high employee involvement requires radical changes in human behavior. Power is redistributed to the working level. Employees and unions are encouraged and empowered to fill more diverse roles. Managers and supervisors must release a considerable measure of authority by delegation, decentralization, and reorganization into smaller business units. Decision-making is transformed from a unified, rank-ordered system to a broad-based egalitarian process.
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> Changing human behavior, restructuring work, and diversifying employee responsibilities take time, require a high level of trust on the part of everyone involved, and fundamentally change the entire structure and process of management. The organization is gradually transformed, and the employees become active players in the transition.[3]

Implementation of these strategies, over time, will produce a very positive impact on the New York State Education Department—a more enthusiastic and less cynical staff, which, in turn, will foster increased productivity and work performed with more care and greater skill. And this, in turn, will better serve the public's interest.

[3]Work in America Institute, *New Roles for Managers* (1989), p. 7.